

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 061740Z MAR 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3835
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY MADRID
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 03602

EXDIS

USEEC

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 AND 2
TAGS: PEPR, PCAT, MASS, LY, NATO
SUBJECT: MILITARY SALES TO LIBYA

REF: STATE 24256 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: NATO MIDDLE EAST EXPERTS MEETING BROUGHT
OUT FACT THAT SOME OF OUR ALLIES DO NOT ACCEPT OUR
ASSESSMENT OF THE DANGERS OF THE QADHAFI REGIME.
THIS DIFFERENCE IN OUTLOOK ADVERSELY AFFECTS OUR
POLICY OF DISCOURAGING ARMS SALES TO LIBYA. IF WE
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WISH TO CONVINCE OUR ALLIES OF OUR ASSESSMENT, WE
WILL HAVE TO FURNISH THEM WITH MORE SPECIFICS.
END SUMMARY

1. DURING MEETING OF NATO MIDDLE EAST EXPERTS
FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 2, DIFFERENCES IN ASSESSMENT OF
QADHAFI REGIME BETWEEN US AND SOME OF OUR ALLIES

WERE BROUGHT OUT. US REPS USED GENERAL LANGUAGE IN US BRIEFING PAPER CONTRIBUTION FOR MEETING, INCLUDING FACT THAT QADHAFI HAS BEEN CONTINUING TO GIVE SUPPORT TO INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. SOME REPS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN FOREIGN MINISTRIES AT MEETING, CONTENDING THAT RECENTLY QADHAFI HAD SHOWN SIGNS OF MODERATION IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CHALLENGED US CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF QADHAFI REGIME AND ASKED WHAT SPECIFIC REPORTS USG COULD PRODUCE IN SUPPORT OF ITS ASSESSMENT.

2. AS MEETING PROCEEDED, GROUP BROKE INTO SUB-COMMITTEES TO DRAFT SECTIONS OF REPORT. US REPS WERE NOT IN SUB-COMMITTEE ON NORTH AFRICA, WHICH WAS HEADED BY FRENCH. RESULT WAS THAT BASICALLY FRENCH DRAFT FOR THIS SECTION MADE NO MENTION OF QADHAFI REGIME'S SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, SO THAT AT FINAL SESSION US REPS HAD TO DEVOTE SOME EFFORT TO INSERTING SENTENCE COVERING THIS.

3. PROBLEM OF CONVINCING SOME OF OUR ALLIES ON THIS ISSUE IS NOT ONLY IMPORTANT FOR SUCH COMMON ASSESSMENTS, BUT ALSO HAS IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR POLICY ON ARMS SALES. IF, AS THIS MEETING AND OTHER RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH US REPS HAVE INDICATED, SOME OF OUR ALLIES ARE NOT PERSUADED THAT THE QADHAFI REGIME IS AS INIQUITOUS AND DANGEROUS

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AS WE BELIEVE IT IS, THEY WILL BE LESS APT TO SUPPORT THE US POLICY OF WITHHOLDING ARMS SALES FROM LIBYA.

4. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE OUR WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES WITH MORE SPECIFICS ON THE DESTRUCTIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE QADHAFI REGIME. TERSE GENERAL LANGUAGE SUCH AS THAT IN REFTEL WILL NOT SUFFICE. WE BELIEVE THE EFFORT SHOULD TAKE THE FORM BOTH OF MORE PUBLICLY RELEASED USG BILLS OF PARTICULARS (SUCH AS EXPANDING ON THE PAPER SUPPLIED TO THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE LAST YEAR), AND OF MORE RELEASES OF INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL ON LIBYAN ACTIONS TO OUR ALLIES ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS. WE REALIZE THAT THESE STEPS WILL POSE DIFFICULTIES FOR THE US INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY; HOWEVER, IT APPEARS TO US THAT SUCH CONCERNS MUST BE BALANCED AGAINST THE NEED TO UTILIZE MORE OF OUR INTELLIGENCE FOR SUCH AN URGENT POLICY OBJECTIVE.

5. ACCORDINGLY, WE PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC STEPS: A) THAT WE STEP UP THE FLOW OF SUCH INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL TO OUR WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES, BOTH

ON A BILATERAL GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS AND

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-----127530 061947Z /42

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AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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THROUGH CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMON NATO INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM. SUCH INTELLIGENCE ITEMS SHOULD BE INTENDED FOR DISTRIBUTION TO FOREIGN MINISTRY POLICY OFFICIALS AS WELL AS ALLIED SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES. THEY WOULD INCLUDE CHAPTER AND VERSE, TO THE DEGREE FEASIBLE, OF THE MOST RECENT EVIDENCE OF THE QADHAFI REGIME'S HARBORING OF TERRORISTS SUCH AS CARLOS AND EXAMPLES OF ITS CONTINUED PROMOTION OF SUBVERSION OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN AREAS OF CONCERN TO NATO.

B) SINCE WE ALREADY SHARE SO MUCH INFORMATION WITH THE BRITISH, AND SINCE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS THE MOST SECURE OF OUR ALLIES IN PROTECTING IN-
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TELLIGENCE, SPECIAL ADDITIONAL PACKAGING WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE BRITISH.

C) IF THE ASSESSMENTS OF LIBYAN ACTIONS ARE STILL A MATTER OF LIVE OR POTENTIAL CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE USG AND OUR WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES BY THE TIME OF THE NEXT MIDDLE EAST EXPERTS MEETING IN NATO, WE SHOULD ADD A DETAILED APPENDIX TO THE US BRIEFING CONTRIBUTION FOR THAT MEETING ON WHICH THE US REP COULD DRAW.

D) MEANWHILE, WE SHOULD GIVE CONSIDERATION TO MULTILATERAL APPROACHES TO OUR WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES ON HOW TO DEAL WITH LIBYA BOTH IN HIGHER LEVEL NATO MEETINGS AND IN MESSAGES TO THE EC-NINE PRESIDENCY THIS SPRING. AGAIN, SUCH POLICY APPROACHES WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF BACKED UP BY A SPECIFIC AND DETAILED BILL OF PARTICULARS.

E) FINALLY, SINCE WE MAY LACK SOME CREDIBILITY WITH OUR ALLIES UNLESS WE ARE PREPARED TO EXPLAIN OURSELVES PUBLICLY ON THIS ISSUE TO A GREATER EXTENT, WE COULD UNDERTAKE TO DECLASSIFY MORE INFORMATION FOLLOWING LAST YEAR'S PRECEDENT WITH THE SENATE HEARINGS ON INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.

6. THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS MESSAGE WAS BRIEFLY DISCUSSED WITH THE USNATO POLITICAL SECTION BY LONDON EMBOFF WHO PARTICIPATED IN MIDDLE EAST EXPERTS MEETING LAST WEEK. IN WASHINGTON FURTHER DETAILS ON POSITION OF OUR ALLIES AT THIS MEETING CAN BE OBTAINED IN NEA FROM MONTVILLE WHO ALSO PARTICIPATED.

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